



TRANSITIONS

INTRODUCTION

In fall 2020, the Shubenacadie Canal Commission officially announced Transitions—a three-year research and planning project to increase awareness, access, and usage of the Shubenacadie Canal Waterway as a natural and cultural resource. It will shine a light on the rural sections of the waterway and tell new stories that promote the contributions made by previously underrepresented groups such as the Mi'kmaq, Acadians, Gaels, African Nova Scotians, and women. This will involve making enhancements to the exhibits and interpretive information along the waterway and at the Fairbanks Centre in Dartmouth.



BACKGROUND

Nova Scotia's largest river basin is the Shubenacadie, stretching 72 km from Enfield to Maitland on the Cobequid Bay. The entirety of the Shubenacadie Canal Waterway system spans 114 km, connecting the Halifax Harbour to the Bay of Fundy and consisting of seven lakes and one river.

The project seeks to combine the historical and cultural heritage of the waterway with its rapidly changing rural communities and landscapes. It is about taking the opportunity to document, illustrate, and forecast the waterway's natural and humanmade transitions. The focus is on the changing needs of communities and the ecologies and economies of the river system, especially over the last 158 years (corresponding to the development of the Shubenacadie Canal system).

Transitions will show how this past can inform the present and how history, new technologies, and the natural environment can together shape our future. It is an opportunity to tell new stories and to engage in different dialogue with the community. It is time for the Shubenacadie Canal Commission to expand the interpretation of sites to include vital subjects such as the cultural memory, both past and present, of Mi'kmaw communities.

TRANSITIONS IS FOCUSED ON TWO PRIORITIES:

1. Work with stakeholders to raise awareness, conduct research, and create pilot projects (for which funding is available) that highlight the rural river section of the waterway, including its unique natural and cultural histories, the world's highest tides, fishing, mining, dairy farming, and rapidly changing rural communities.

2. Substantially rework and augment the exhibit space at the Fairbanks Centre in Dartmouth to include these research findings and to promote cultural awareness of the contributions of underrepresented people, notably women and families, Mi'kmaq, Acadians, Gaels, African Nova Scotians, and immigrants.

Transitions is implemented in three phases:

- (1) consultation and planning;
- (2) research, design, and pilot projects; and
- (3) completion of new exhibits, displays, and learning and evaluation events.



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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission graciously thanks supporters of the Transitions project:



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Communities, Culture and Heritage



ABOUT THE SHUBENACADIE CANAL COMMISSION

The SCC was created by an act of the Nova Scotia Legislature in 1986 to oversee and further promote the Shubenacadie Canal System including the operation of any information or interpretative centres pertaining to or belonging to the Shubenacadie Canal System. Our mission is to preserve the historic features of the Shubenacadie Canal and to provide access to a 114 km long waterway for the education and the enjoyment of the public.

The SCC achieves this mission through preservation, improvement, and maintenance of waterway and canal structures and features, providing for the maximum practical use of the waterway by shallow draft watercraft, interpreting sites for visitors, and providing park-like settings for residents and tourists. In addition to the above mission, the SCC is a registered charity and manages roughly 100 acres of parkland and buildings including the Fairbanks Centre. Further information on the SCC can be found at www.shubenacadiecanal.ca.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Those interested in learning more about Transitions or sharing information/research and/or pilot project ideas, may contact:

Email:

transitions@shubenacadiecanal.ca

Phone:

(902) 462-1826

Web:

shubenacadiecanal.ca/transitions



Photo: Rob Walsh Photography

